

What's Playing in Africa, Wednesday, May 26, 2010

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Governance

<http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/InsidePage.php?id=2000010250&cid=4&ttl>

AG disapproves ruling amidst fury from Muslims

Except for ecstasy in Church and the 'No' camp, two words sum up reaction to ruling by three judges Kadhi's Courts are illegal — outrage and defiance. As a storm set off by the ruling that inclusion of Islamic family courts in the Constitution was discriminatory against other faiths spread, Attorney General Amos Wako declared the ruling unconstitutional and filed a notice of appeal. Orange Democratic Movement, through its Secretary General Prof Anyang' Nyong'o spoke defiantly about the ruling and declared the three judges were part of the anti-reform brigade. Muslims fought back arguing the Constitution is clear family matters such as marriage and inheritance cannot be discriminatory.

<http://www.zimeye.org/?p=17713>

MDC welcomes lawsuit against Tsvangirai

The MDC party has welcomed the lawsuit raised against their party leader Morgan Tsvangirai who together with President Robert Mugabe are being taken to court for allegedly flouting the global political agreement set in 2008.

Responding to an article re-published on ZimEye on Monday, national executive member, Eddie Cross confirmed the party's corporate view on the lawsuit: Demonstrators march through Harare demanding an end to brutality

"The MDC welcomes this position" he said. The two, Tsvangirai and Mugabe, are faced with a lawsuit in which they are accused of having inflated government with 10 extra faces which appointment The Voice for Democracy Trust argues was unconstitutional, effectively bloated Cabinet, and is now a drain on the taxpayer. The ten new faces include five ZANU-PF Ministers — Saviour Kasukuwere, Joseph Made, Walter Mzembi, Flora Bhuka, Sylvester Nguni as well as the MDC-T's Henry Madzorera, Giles Mutsekwa and Sekai Holland who according to the statement must now be declared null and void.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE6400TQ20100525>

US says Ethiopia vote not up to int'l standards

The United States said on Tuesday Ethiopia's election failed to meet international standards and called for stronger democratic institutions in the country, a key U.S. ally in Africa. "While the elections were calm and peaceful and largely without any kind of violence, we note with some degree of remorse that the elections there were not up to international standards," Assistant Secretary of State Johnnie Carson told a House of Representatives panel.

Carson, the Obama administration's top diplomat for Africa, said Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi's government had taken "clear and decisive" steps to ensure it won a landslide victory in Sunday's vote. The ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front and allied parties won nearly every seat in the country's 547-member parliament.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE6400EL20100525>

Ethiopia's Meles urges recognition of poll win

Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi urged foreign nations on Tuesday to respect his landslide election win and told the opposition they would be consulted on decisions of national concern. The country's electoral board told state television the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and allies had won 477 seats out of 479 declared, giving Meles an overwhelming majority in the 547-member parliament. "Even if you don't have seats in parliament we promise to consult you on issues of national concern. We consider you an important part of this renaissance," Meles said, reaching out to opposition leaders at a victory rally in Addis Ababa. Meles told tens of thousands of cheering supporters that foreign forces could not overturn the outcome of the poll in this Horn of Africa nation and key Washington ally and warned against any post-election bloodshed.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/africa/10153216.stm>

EU observers says Ethiopia election falls short

EU observers have criticised Ethiopia's election, as Prime Minister Meles Zenawi held a victory rally attended by tens of thousands of people. There was an "uneven playing field", said chief EU observer Thijs Berman. The governing party has won 499 of 536 seats declared but the opposition has complained of vote-rigging. Violent protests over alleged fraud in the last poll in 2005 left about 200 people dead. With provisional results announced in all but 11 seats, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) is set to massively increase its majority in parliament.

Conflict

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/africa/10159089.stm>

UN force to Chad and CAR

The UN Security Council has voted to withdraw a UN force from Chad and the Central African Republic. The 4,375-strong force is to pull out in stages by the end of 2010. It was deployed in 2009 to protect hundreds of thousands of displaced Chadians and refugees from the Sudanese province of Darfur. The withdrawal was requested by Chad. But Amnesty International warned that the UN decision could endanger thousands of refugees in the region. "The Security Council should stand up for the vulnerable women, men and young people living in the region," Amnesty said before the vote. "It is wholly unacceptable that this resolution is taking place before the Chadian government has shown it has a concrete plan to provide security."

Economic

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE6400SC20100525>

Africa's growing wealth needs to be spread beyond the confines of powerful elites and governments must come clean about opaque mining and oil deals, a leading think-tank said on Tuesday. In its annual report, the Africa Progress Panel, chaired by former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, identified poor governance and creaking transport and power infrastructure as the main impediments to the continent of a billion people.

"Only leadership and governance can close the gap between a rich continent and a poor people," Annan told a news conference in South Africa's commercial capital. The report highlighted Africa's increasing

ties with emerging giants such as China, which has overtaken the United States as the region's top trading partner, saying they were having a "significant impact" on the continent.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE64P02820100526>

Striking S.Africa workers call sympathy stoppages

Striking South African transport workers called on Tuesday for sympathy stoppages, including at the national airline, but a strike by electricity workers was barred by a last-minute court order. A union representing about half the workers at power utility Eskom called off a strike over pay due to start on Wednesday at the state-owned firm after a court declared the planned industrial action illegal. The South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (Satawu), which represents strikers in a pay dispute at the state-owned logistics group Transnet, said it had issued notices for sympathy actions at other transport and shipping firms. These will start next Tuesday if the dispute with Transnet, where a strike is now in its third week, is not resolved, it said. The Transnet strike is already affecting ports and railways, and has held up exports of metals, cars, fruit and wine to Europe and Asia, as well as imports of vehicle parts and fuel supplies in Africa's biggest economy.

<http://www1.herald.co.zw/inside.aspx?sectid=19285&cat=1>

Diamond monitor hails Zim

THE Kimberley Process Certification Scheme diamond monitor, Mr Abbey Chikane, has commended Mbada Diamonds and Canadile Miners for working hard towards meeting the KP requirements. He said their systems had improved tremendously since his first visit in March this year. Mbada Diamonds and Canadile Miners are so far the only companies awarded licences by the Government to mine diamonds at Chiadzwa. Pressed whether or not he would certify the Chiadzwa diamonds and give Zimbabwe the nod to export the mineral this time around as he had indicated on his first trip in March, Mr Chikane said: "I am still in the middle of my trip. At present it is immature to say that. I will be able to comment on that at the end of my visit (Friday)." Mr Chikane, who arrived in the country on Monday, yesterday visited the Chiadzwa diamond fields where he inspected operations at Canadile Miners and Mbada Diamonds before visiting villages surrounding the diamond fields.

<http://www.afrol.com/articles/36192>

Gold revenues leave Ghana untaxed

A new study demonstrates how multi-national companies generate great revenues from Ghana's rich gold resources without leaving sums worth mentioning in the country. International tax havens make it possible to dupe Ghanaian coffers. Today, the report "Golden Profits on Ghana's Expense – An example of incoherence in EU policy" was presented by the two Danish NGOs DanWatch and Concord in Copenhagen. As part of an effort to reveal how tax evasion and capital flight from developing countries is outnumbering development aid by a factor of one to ten, the report is a case study of how Ghana sees little revenues from its immense gold riches.

Food Crisis

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE64O0T620100525>

Chad hunger overshadowed by Niger food crisis: UN

Relief efforts for two million people facing food shortages in Chad are suffering because donors are concentrating aid on neighbouring Niger, a United Nations agency warned on Tuesday. Niger is seen at the centre of a looming food crisis in the Sahel, the strip of land stretching across the south of the Sahara where some 10 million people are facing hunger in coming months because of poor rains last year. But the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) sounded an alarm that Chad, which along with its neighbour is one of the world's poorest nations, was being overlooked. "Donors are afraid of a

repetition of the 2005 food crisis in Niger, when many people starved to death," Fatouma Seid, the FAO's emergency operations expert, said in a statement.

Of Interest

<http://www.mg.co.za/article/2010-05-25-nuke-talks-above-pik-bothas-paygrade>

Nuke talks 'above Pik Botha's pay-grade'

A US academic told the Mail & Guardian on Tuesday that former foreign minister Pik Botha would not have known about discussions with the Israel regarding nuclear weapons. United States academic Sasha Polakow-Suransky uncovered secret South African documents which reveal that Israel offered to sell nuclear warheads to the apartheid regime, providing the first official documentary evidence of the state's possession of nuclear weapons.

The "top secret" minutes of meetings between senior officials from the two countries in 1975 show that South Africa's defence minister, PW Botha, asked for the warheads and Shimon Peres, then Israel's defence minister and now its president, responded by offering them "in three sizes". The "three sizes" are believed to refer to the conventional, chemical and nuclear weapons. The two men also signed a broad-ranging agreement governing military ties between the two countries. The allegations prompted a strongly worded response from Peres's office and Botha.